

PROGRAMMATIC REQUIREMENTS and GOOD PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF SECTION 10-17 E-J, INCLUSIVE, OF THE CONNECTICUT GENERAL STATUTES (CGS)

Student Identification

The statute does not prescribe specific steps. The current procedures are expected to remain in place: preliminary assessment of dominant language; final determination of dominant language; determination of English proficiency.

Meetings with Parents and Program Choice

School districts must hold meetings with parents and legal guardians of eligible students and adhere to the following:

- explain the benefits of the language program options available in the district;
- advise parents and legal guardians that they may bring an interpreter or advisor;
- place students in bilingual education programs if the parent or legal guardian opts for that choice
- exempt the student from the bilingual education program if the parent or legal guardian notifies the district that the student is to be exempt from the program.

Good Practice Recommendations:

- use the parents' native language and English to facilitate communication;
- explain the benefits verbally, in writing or by use of videos or other media to insure that parents/guardians are properly informed;
- inform parents that the statute guarantees their right to choose among the available language program options and that, whatever their choice, the district will make every effort to provide an effective educational program;
- provide parents with strategies they can use to support their child's education and with ways in which they can work with the school toward that end.

Program of Bilingual Education Redefined; Instructional Programming

A program of bilingual education:

- makes instructional use of both English and an eligible student's native language;
- enables eligible students to achieve English proficiency and academic mastery of subject matter content and higher order skills, including critical thinking, so as to meet appropriate grade promotion and graduation requirements;
- provides for the continuous increase in the use of English and corresponding decrease in the use of the native language for the purpose of instruction within each year and from year to year and provides for the use of English for more than half of the instructional time by the end of the first year;
- may develop the native language skills of eligible students;
- may include the participation of English-proficient students if the program is designed to enable all enrolled students to become more proficient in English and a second language.

Good Practice Recommendations:

- determine student language and academic learning needs;
- make maximal use of native language for content teaching in first year and of native language support for content teaching in first and succeeding years;
- conduct a rigorous ESL instructional program, with double periods in year 1, including speaking, literacy, and content-based language development;
- assist students in learning content in English through sheltered content instruction and develop their academic language and literacy skills through content area instruction;
- introduce sheltered content instruction in English by bilingual and monolingual English speaking teachers; train students in learning strategies, and higher order and critical thinking skills in the native language and English;
- collaborate with staff in designing and conducting professional development pertaining to strategies for effective instruction of eligible students;

- make full use of all supplementary services, as appropriate, e.g., Title I, special education;
- integrate program instruction with district initiatives, e.g., K-3 reading plan;
- use partial mainstreaming on a subject by subject basis;
- establish joint instructional planning and monitoring of student progress by bilingual, ESL, and monolingual English speaking teachers; provide teachers with training in collaborative approaches;
- allow for flexible and creative scheduling.

30 Month Limit; Language Transition Support Services

Students are limited to 30 months in the program, not counting summer school or two-way language programs, and are to meet the state English mastery standard. Districts are to provide language transition support services for students not meeting the standard within the 30 months. These may include ESL, sheltered English programs, English immersion, tutoring and homework assistance. Families may receive guidance to help children progress in the native language.

Good Practice Recommendations for Providing Language Transition Support Services:

- determine student needs for language transition support services;
- plan language transition support services such as ESL, including literacy and content-based instruction;
- assist students in learning content in English through sheltered content instruction and develop academic language and literacy skills through content area instruction;
- utilize such approaches as partial mainstreaming, resource room help, and tutoring with written/reading assignments and tests;
- teach learning strategies, higher order and critical thinking skills.;
- make available such library resources as native language and English textual material, software, classics and high interest books on tape and in alternative formats, and other media resources related to academic content.

English as a Second Language (ESL) Program Defined

A program that uses only English as the instructional language for eligible students and enables such students to achieve English proficiency and academic mastery of subject matter content and higher order skills, including critical thinking, so as to meet appropriate grade promotion and graduation requirements.

Good Practice Recommendations:

- ensure that an ESL program addresses students' need for academic learning as well as English proficiency and literacy;
- adhere to the good practice recommendations presented in the two preceding sections and in the following section.

Services for Secondary Students Enrolling with Under 30 Months to Graduation

If an eligible student enrolls in a secondary school with fewer than thirty months before graduation, assign the student to an ESL program (see definition of ESL program). The district may provide intensive services to enable the student to speak, write and comprehend English by the time of graduation and to meet course requirements for graduation.

Good Practice Recommendations:

- determine student language and academic learning needs;
- offer the student an orientation to the school and school system;
- provide high intensity ESL including speaking, literacy and academic English;
- assist the student in learning content in English through such approaches as sheltered content instruction, partial mainstreaming, resource room help, and tutoring with written/reading assignments and tests;
- teach learning strategies, higher order and critical thinking skills;
- make available library resources (text, software, classics and high interest books on tape and in alternative formats, and other media resources related to academic content).

Annual Assessment of Student Progress and Language Support Services

The Department has developed a state English mastery standard to assess the linguistic and academic **progress** of students. School districts must assess annually the progress of students toward meeting the standard (refer to the Q & A document for details on the annual assessment process). They must provide language support services for students, in consultation with parents, who are not making **sufficient** progress toward meeting the standard. These may include summer school, after-school help and tutoring. Students who meet the standard shall leave the program. Districts are to record the date of entry into the bilingual education program and the date and results of the assessment on the students' permanent records.

Good Practice Recommendations:

- devise a process for deciding whether or not students are making sufficient progress toward meeting the state English mastery standard;
- prepare parent consultations for students in need of language support services;
- plan language support services including ESL (speaking, literacy, content-based);
- assist students in mastering content with such approaches as: native language support; academic English instruction; sheltered content instruction; instruction in higher order and critical thinking skills and learning strategies; help in completing written assignments and preparing for tests; and resource room help;
- enhance the current instructional program and align, to the extent possible, with skills tested;
- make available library resources native language and English textual materials, software, classics and high interest books on tape and in alternative formats, and other media resources related to academic content.

Professional Development, Coordination and Collaboration

Integrate bilingual education and ESL teachers in all staff, planning and curriculum development activities.

Good Practice Recommendations:

- assess staff training needs in terms of new instructional requirements, including language support and language transition support services;
- train current staff in effective instructional practices including: experiential and discovery learning; first and second language acquisition and teaching strategies; first and second language literacy development; learning strategies, higher order and critical thinking skill development; technology for teaching; use of print and media resources; parent consultation; joint planning, collaboration, and team teaching;
- provide administrative leadership, direction and support for staff collaboration;
- hire sufficient certified and qualified bilingual education and ESL teachers, bilingual guidance personnel, and home/school liaisons;
- encourage bilingual high school graduates to enter the teaching profession as bilingual education, ESL and regular classroom teachers.

Encouraging Two-Way Language Programs and Second Language Instruction

School districts that are required to provide a program of bilingual education must investigate the feasibility of establishing two-way language programs starting in kindergarten. The Department will assist and encourage school districts to institute **two-way language programs** and **provide early second language instruction for English-speaking students**.

Good Practice Recommendations:

- determine whether any district schools have conditions favorable for establishing a two-way language program;
- poll the district, school, staff and parents regarding their support for such program;
- ascertain whether the district has or is willing to commit the necessary resources for planning and implementing such a program;
- seek technical assistance in establishing a two-way language program.

Encouraging Teacher Exchange Programs

The Department of Education will promote and encourage teacher exchange programs and provide information to districts on such programs in order to increase foreign language proficiency and cultural understanding.

CMT/CAPT Exemption Modified

The requirement to take the CMT and CAPT will not apply to any student enrolled for ten (10) school months or less in a bilingual program or an ESL program.

Annual Reporting Requirements Modified

Districts receiving state bilingual education funds, annually, on or before September 1, must submit to the Department a progress report that includes: a) measures of increased educational opportunities including language support services and language transition support services provided; b) program evaluation and measures of effectiveness of bilingual and ESL programs, which include CMT/CAPT results and graduation and school dropout rates.

If you have questions about programmatic changes, please contact George P. DeGeorge, bilingual education consultant, Bureau of Curriculum and Teacher Standards, at 860 713-6750 or by email at george.degeorge@po.state.ct.us. If you have questions about program evaluation, please contact the Bureau of Program and Teacher Evaluation at 860 713-6810. For questions concerning the annual assessment, contact Renée Savoie by telephone at 860 713-6858 or by email renee.savoie@po.state.ct.us.